



CONGREGATION BETH EL SCROLL

JUNE 2026 • SIVAN-TAMMUZ 5786

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From the Beth El Clergy

YEAR IN REVIEW

BY RABBI GREG HARRIS



Editor's note: This article is based on Rabbi Harris's talk at the May 20 Annual Meeting.

I am proud to be Jewish. I say it from the bimah. I say it to assemblies of Religious School

students and Preschool families. I talk about it at Senior Caucus gatherings, and it is a recurring theme in my classes, gatherings, and conversations. We have even put it on a sign along Old Georgetown Road for everyone to see who passes by Beth El – Proud to Be Jewish.

We live in a moment where that feeling is challenged from multiple directions. And, yet, Beth El is a community which allows Jewish pride to flourish.

Pray; Learn; Connect. These are recurring ways we engage in the Beth El community. We **pray** in wonderful musical services on Friday evenings and with members leading Saturday morning services and study sessions. At Beth El, expressions of Jewish creativity abound. Meditation and "sound bath" experiences have brought new avenues of Jewish exploration. This year, we also expressed our gratitude as we removed our yellow ribbons for Israel after 843 days.

We have **learned** in Beth El classrooms as well as breweries, in each other's living rooms, and in our backyards. We remain curious and nurture a community of asking questions. And yet, I also know many people are intimidated to ask Jewish questions. I often hear of a sense that "everyone

else knows what is happening." This is another invitation to you to ask the clergy the questions about Judaism you are unsure of. I have been with many people who finally asked the questions they had been holding onto for a long time – about theology, ritual practice, or culture. The joy and relief they feel at finally voicing their question is always amazing. We may not have *the* answer but we will begin searching together. In February, we were challenged by Dr. Masua Sagiv of the Shalom Hartman Institute as our Scholar in Residence. Also, an intentional process occurred this year for re-envisioning the Religious School upper grades. Many people were engaged, and *Netivot* is the exciting result. (See [page 8](#) of the April 2026 *Scroll* for additional information about the *Netivot* program.)

And we **connected** with each other in important ways. During the government shutdowns this past year, we created space for people to come for weekly lunches to feel seen and to break the isolation at home. This year, we held each other at hard moments and we celebrated together. We relished the birth of Meira Ben Ezra-Megdal, Karen and Rabbi Megdal's daughter.

As I prepare for my 25th year at Beth El and we get ready to celebrate Beth El's 75th anniversary in the coming year, I recall a saying of Rav Nachman of Breslov:

"If you won't be better tomorrow than you were today, then what do you need tomorrow for?"

Rav Nachman was right. In close collaboration of my fellow clergy, staff, and leadership, we are using today to

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SCROLL

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SERVICE INFORMATION

MINYAN SCHEDULE

Sunday

9:00 am and 8:00 pm

Monday - Thursday

7:30* am and 8:00 pm

Friday

7:30 am

**Morning Minyan will take place at Beth El at 9:00 am on June 19.
The office will be closed for the Federal holiday.*

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Friday, June 5

6:00 pm Shir Yachad Light Dinner

7:00 pm Shir Yachad Friday Night Musical Service

Saturday, June 6 - Pride Shabbat

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service - Meira Baila Benezra-Megdal
Baby Naming (approx. 10:00 am)

Friday, June 12

6:30 pm Pups in the Parking Lot Shabbat

Saturday, June 13

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service - Sasha Silberman Bat Mitzvah
Aliyah honoring Ricardo Munster

12:30 pm Yah Echosof Meditation Group

Friday, June 19 - Juneteenth

Office closed.

6:30 pm Yedid Nefesh Friday Night Musical Service

Saturday, June 20

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service led by Minyan Chaverim

Friday, June 26

6:00 pm Kol Haneshama Light Dinner

7:00 pm Kol Haneshama Friday Night Musical Service

8:00 pm Kol Haneshama Oneg with Guest Speaker

Saturday, June 27

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service

*For more information on Beth El's Shabbat services and daily
minyanim, please visit bethelmc.org/services.*

FROM THE CLERGY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

prepare and build a better, more vibrant, and relevant tomorrow
for Beth El.

We have deeply listened to you about how you want to gather,
pray, and learn. We have created new experiences alongside
our traditional practices. Traditional services... and alternative
rituals. Gathering within Beth El and out in the community.

We are proud of all the ways Beth El has thrived for 75 years.
I know Beth El's tomorrow will be built off the efforts we are
doing today... shaped by the foundational values articulated
back at Beth El's founding in 1951.

I am proud to be Jewish. I am proud of how we express our
Judaism at Beth El.

What a year it has been. I pray we each move from strength
to strength as we enter Beth El's 75th year. ■

MONTHLY PROGRAMMING

Click on any event on the calendar below to find out more about these upcoming programs.

June Events at Beth El

Connect

June 1
7:00 pm

Sound and Soul

Join us for a guided, meditative evening of sound, breath, and stillness.



June 4
7:00 pm

WBE and MC Happy Hour

Women of Beth El and Men's Club will gather for a happy hour at World of Beer.



June 7
12:00 pm

Tzelem LGBT+ Teen Group

This is a safe space for Jewish teens to talk about the issues in their lives.



June 18
2:00 pm

Ricardo Retirement Celebration

Help us celebrate Ricardo Munster's 20 years at Beth El as he retires.



June 18
6:30 pm

Keshet Nashim Annual Dinner

This is a women's cancer support group for cancer patients and survivors.



Pray

June 5
6:00 pm

Shir Yachad Musical Shabbat

Join Hazzan Fradkin for dinner at 6:00 pm followed by a musical service at 7:00 pm.



June 6
10:00 am

Benezra-Megdal Baby Naming

All are invited to join us for the naming of Meira Baila Benezra-Megdal.



June 12
6:30 pm

Pups in the Parking Lot Shabbat

Bring your dog for a casual outdoor Shabbat service in the Beth El Parking Lot.



June 19
6:30 pm

Yedid Nefesh Friday Night Service

Friday evening musical service that blends familiar melodies and traditional liturgy



June 20
9:15 am

Minyan Chaverim

Minyan Chaverim will lead the Main Shabbat Service on June 20.



June 26
6:00 pm

Kol Haneshama Musical Shabbat

Light dinner is followed by our musical service then an oneg with guest speaker.



Engage

June 7
10:00 am

WBE El Annual Meeting

Women of Beth El will elect their new board and welcome guest speaker Rabbi Shira Stutman.



June 24
7:30 pm

WBE at the National Theatre

Join Women of Beth El to see the Tony Award-winning musical *Suffs*.



Learn

June 11
7:00 pm

WBE Coffee & Hebrew with Yoel

Shaliach Yoel leads Women of Beth El in relaxed cafe-style Hebrew lessons.



June 13
12:30 pm

Yah Eschof Meditation Group

Explore Judaism through meditation, chant, and study with Hazzan Fradkin



June 25
7:00 pm

WBE Coffee & Hebrew with Yoel

Shaliach Yoel leads Women of Beth El in relaxed cafe-style Hebrew lessons.



June 28
11:00 am

Congregant Security Training

JShield will lead a congregation-wide training on community safety.



CONGREGATION BETH EL
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Find out more and sign up to
participate at

bethelmc.org/events

A Fresh Chapter for the *Scroll*

BY TIARRA JOSLYN

In the past 75 years, since its first publication in 1951, the *Scroll* has undergone many transformations and re-imaginings – the most recent of these being our move to a fully digital *Scroll* in 2024. As the graphic designer for the *Scroll* since fall of 2013, I've been involved in quite a few of these changes; and, as the shul's communications manager, I've welcomed and listened to the feedback of many congregants about how the *Scroll* can best share information. I'm excited to share an upcoming change that I believe will make the *Scroll* more engaging, enjoyable, and accessible for everyone who wishes to connect, engage, learn, and pray with the Beth El community.

Beginning in September, we will transition from our current digital format to a streamlined email-digest to bring the *Scroll* directly to your inbox in a way that's easier to read and interact with.

Over the past two years, I've heard from many members that the digital format can be challenging, especially on mobile and tablet devices, where zooming and scrolling can make reading less convenient. For some, opening and navigating a separate file can even become a barrier to staying connected. By moving to an email-based format, we're removing those obstacles and making it simpler to engage with the content you care about.

The new *Scroll* format will offer several improvements over the current digital format. Content will automatically adjust to your screen size no matter what type of device you're using, eliminating the need to pinch, zoom, or scroll awkwardly. There will be no more need to click through to a separate digital file or go to the Beth El website to download a PDF version; everything will load directly in your email. Overall, it will be a cleaner, more straightforward format that helps to ensure everyone can stay informed and connected.

I truly believe that this change will enhance the experience for many in our community while keeping the *Scroll* meaningful. That said, inclusivity remains important to me and the entire Beth El team, so congregants who currently receive a print copy of the *Scroll* will continue to receive a condensed printed digest version. The condensed version will consist of key items such as "From the Clergy," the services schedule (and any holiday schedules), upcoming events highlights, contributions, and the Bulletin Board.

As we prepare for this transition, our June and July-August issues will be the final editions in the current digital format. I look forward to turning the page together with you in September and hope you'll embrace this new format as a meaningful step toward keeping our entire community more informed, inspired, and connected. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at tjoslyn@bethelmc.org. ■

Kol Haneshama Welcomes Speaker DeMaurice Smith

BY LAURA NADEL



Join us on Friday, June 26, for Kol Haneshama, a lay-led service that blends tradition and creativity, drawing on contemporary and innovative Jewish music from around the world. (Re)connect with friends old and new and welcome Shabbat in a joyful, participatory, and engaging service! The evening begins with a light dinner at 6:00 pm followed by our

musical service at 7:00 pm. At approximately 8:15 pm, we'll welcome our guest speaker, DeMaurice Smith, who will speak on "How Integrity, Courage and the Collective Responsibility to Uplift Others Have Shaped a Career in Securing the Rights of Workers."

DeMaurice Smith is a consultant and professor in residence at Pepperdine Caruso School of Law, and former executive director of the union representing NFL players and counsel to then-deputy attorney general Eric Holder in the U.S. Department of Justice.

The deadline to register for dinner is noon on Wednesday, June 24. No RSVP required to attend only the service and oneg. Find out more and register for dinner at bethelmc.org/kol-haneshama-0626. ■



Beth El will hold congregation-wide security training on June 28 on community safety and threat response. Jshield will be at Beth El from 11:00 am to noon to instruct and model best practices on staying aware and safe at the synagogue and beyond.

Participants will learn how to recognize behaviors that may signal concern, strengthen everyday situational awareness, and respond calmly and effectively during moments of uncertainty. We will also include age-appropriate guidance for parents and teens so that every part of our community can feel informed and prepared. For more information and to register, go to bethelmc.org/events/security-0628.

Ricardo Munster: Getting Here, Moving On

BY DONNA VOGEL

After almost 20 years, Ricardo Munster will retire at the end of June. You probably know that Ricardo is originally from Argentina and are aware of his many contributions to the life of Beth El over the years. Later on, you can see what numerous congregants have said in tribute to his dedication and talents. But in this article, the *Scroll* wanted to find out more about Ricardo's "origin story" and what influence it had on his life and career.

Ricardo Munster embodies kindness and consideration. He is one of the loveliest people I have ever worked with. Quiet, humble, and hardworking. We should all strive to follow his example.

- Hazzan Asa Fradkin

Ricardo's parents were childhood sweethearts who left Germany separately around 1938. His mother, Irma, then only 12, emigrated to New York, while his father, Martin, age 17, went to Argentina. Before they parted, Martin told Irma goodbye, saying, "Someday I will marry you." He worked hard and eventually got to New York but had to wait until Irma was of age. They did marry after returning to Argentina, where Ricardo and his younger brother were born. The family belonged to a Conservative congregation, attending occasionally but not regularly. Ricardo went to a bilingual Spanish/English school. He and his brother both studied engineering and went into the family metal business. During Argentina's financial crisis, the company shut down after 51 years. Ricardo had been volunteering at a Jewish organization, the *Asociacion Filantropica Israelita*, later becoming a member of its board. The AFI had been founded in 1933 to help settle the influx of German-Jewish immigrants. A large part of its work was elder care. In growing financial straits, the AFI asked Ricardo to become its administrator. He thought they were crazy but reluctantly agreed. Unfortunately, he was unable to solve the budget problems through moderate measures and was forced to lay off staff. While Ricardo calls his three years at AFI the best job in his life, the painful layoffs bother him to this day.

Meanwhile, Ricardo was coming off a difficult breakup. His brother and his brother's friend brought their siblings together, and that's how he met his wife. Ricardo and Irene will have been married 48 years in August. They had three sons; the oldest, Alejandro z"l, died in an accident in 1992. Roberto lives in St. Louis, and Gustavo in French-speaking Switzerland, along with their fam-

ilies. Irene, also a child of German-Jewish immigrants, always wanted to live in the United States. But Ricardo had reasons to stay in Argentina...until he didn't. They both had good careers, but when the next financial crisis arrived in 2001, to keep the peace, Ricardo told Irene, "If you find a good job in the U.S., we'll move." Irene had worked at the *Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano*, serving as its head librarian for the last 11 of her 21 years there, before heading the library at the Universidad de San Andres. Within a couple of years, she was offered a position at Duke University, and Ricardo had to keep his promise.

While Irene thrived as the Bibliographer for Latin America and Iberia, later adding Jewish studies to her responsibilities, Ricardo was miserable. While tweaking his resumé to meet American expectations, he started volunteering at the Jewish Federation. He got great joy from visiting organizations for the aging, participating



RICARDO AND WIFE IRENE (RIGHT) WITH LUCY OZARIN z"l AT THE DEDICATION OF THE LUCY OZARIN LEGACY SOCIETY

in Friday night services, kiddushes, and schmoozing, and being named as Volunteer of the Year. By then, Irene had applied to be the library director at the Interamerican Development Bank here in D.C. The job came through, they had friends in the area, their younger son was at the University of Maryland, so here they came in 2006. Their shul-shopping happened to bring them to Beth El on Sisterhood Shabbat, and Ricardo was initially turned off by the size and energy. But that changed. Irene returned temporarily to Argentina upon the death of her father. Ricardo had to stay here because of his job search. He came back to Beth El to say kaddish, since it has a morning minyan. He was warmly welcomed, asked to stay for

breakfast, and offered a schnapps by Borys Gendelman z"l. It was a networking opportunity. Rabbi Bill Rudolph z"l offered encouragement and, six months later, a job opening. Of the many aspects mentioned, Ricardo heard the word "seniors," and that was it. He joined Beth El and has been with us ever since. Just over 10 years ago, in 2016, the Munsters became U.S. citizens.

He treated each and every participant as if they were his parents or close friends. He was caring and kind, and nothing was too much trouble for him.

- Sheila Bellack

Asked why he has such an affinity for seniors, Ricardo credits the time he spent with his grandparents, "Oma" and "Opa." There were many weekends, and always Fri-

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Spotlight on Keshet Nashim Group

BY NAOMI GREENWOOD, MARGE LONDON AND SHERRI STAHL

It is our pleasure to share that we three long-time members of Keshet Nashim were part of a group honored at the Georgetown Lombardi Cancer Center 38th annual Gala.

Women's Cancer Connection: Keshet Nashim was formed in the late 1990's by Marge London and Susan King. Originally a discussion and support group for female breast cancer survivors, it has evolved to include women with any form of cancer.

Following Marge and Susan's leadership were Susan Winarsky and then Naomi Greenwood. Currently, Gail Fribush and Judy Spector coordinate and lead the group.

In 2011, Vivien Marion, a Beth El member who was Senior Director for Medical Center Advancement at Georgetown University, mentioned to Marge that a group of breast cancer survivors was being formed who could work with breast cancer researchers at Georgetown. Marge became one of the first members of the group and recruited Sherri, Naomi and Susan W. to become founding members. Currently there are 14 active members. Since the beginning, Ayesha N. Shajahn-Haq, PhD, has been our dedicated leader

of the monthly meetings.

For 15 years, Georgetown Breast Cancer Advocates (GBCA) input has had an impact on many research projects and clinical trials. The group promotes scientist-advocate collaborations, and teaches young researchers the importance of collaboration and how to communicate clearly and effectively with a lay audience. GBCA has become a model for other cancer research advocacy groups throughout the U.S.

On March 14, at this year's Georgetown Lombardi "Be the Breakthrough" annual Gala, Marge, Naomi and Sherri joined other members of Georgetown Breast Cancer Advocates to receive The Margaret L. Hodges Leadership award. The award is presented to "remarkable individuals who embody Margaret's can-do leadership spirit." The group was honored and delighted to be recognized for efforts to assist in research which may someday improve life for cancer patients and hopefully result in a cure as soon as possible.

If you would like more information about Keshet Nashim, please reach out to Judy Spector or Gail Fribush. ■



TOP (L TO R): SHERRI STAHL, MARGE LONDON, AND NAOMI GREENWOOD
 BOTTOM: GCBA MEMBERS AYESHA N. SHAJAHN-HAQ (IN RED) AND PRESENTERS LAURIE HODGES, LAPEYRE AND WALTER HODGES

RICARDO MUNSTER *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5*

day night dinner. Irene says he has a "natural gift." But whether nature or nurture, Ricardo's devotion to our elder community is unmatched. He hesitates to name people who have been especially influential, not wanting to omit anyone. He does, however, credit Sheila Bellack for helping with visa issues, among others, always quietly and always effectively. And he wants to remember a few special people no longer with us: Rabbi Rudolph, with gratitude for giving him the opportunity; and his two "sweethearts," Lucy Ozarin z"l and Esther Israelow z"l.

What's next? Ricardo and Irene, who retired last December, are staying in the area. They look forward to traveling and seeing their grandchildren. Ricardo is planning to learn French so he can speak with his Franco-

He worked tirelessly to connect older members to the congregation and with each other. Regular phone calls and personal visits were something he did quietly with little fanfare week after week, year after year...because he genuinely cared about his friends in the congregation. - Pat Danoff

phone granddaughter in Switzerland. He also will invest more time in his fitness. And he has an unusual project: his "tough guy" father was going to burn a box of letters he and Irma wrote as teenagers before they married. He allowed Ricardo to take them on condition that he not read them while his father was still alive. Ricardo plans to organize and translate these letters for his sons and grandchildren. He and Irene placed *stolpersteine* in Germany for several members of previous generations of their families. Bringing the story full circle, they continue to learn more about those who came before. ■

We have shared some selected appreciations of Ricardo throughout this article; you can read more at <https://ti-nyurl.com/RicardoMunster>.

Israel in Focus

Shavuot, the Torah, and Eretz Yisrael

BY LARRY SIDMAN

We have just observed Shavuot, the culmination of the seven-week period from Pesach, the holiday of Jewish redemption from slavery in Egypt, to the time of revelation, the giving of the Torah. Regardless of the extent of a Jewish person's religious observance or even whether a Jew believes in God, it is indisputable that the Torah contains the central tenets of the Jewish religion. Among its 613 mitzvot are commandments and laws that are universal, such as the prohibitions against murder, theft, fraud, and adultery found in the Ten Commandments, and those that are particular, such as the laws of kashrut. Christianity openly embraces the Ten Commandments, and Islam requires observance of many laws, such as eating Halal food and burial within 24 hours, that are strikingly similar to Jewish practices.

If one views the Torah through the lens of literature, setting is critical. Remembering our early education, one of the first questions that our elementary school teachers likely asked was: "Where is the story set?" The setting of the Torah is not a fixed place but encompasses many locations in what is commonly known today as the Middle East. One place, however, pervades the Torah and is indispensable to the narrative of the Jewish people described in the Torah, the land of Canaan, Eretz Yisrael. The Torah contains more than 150 references to Canaan. It is the land that HaShem promised to the Jewish people in the Torah.

The centrality of Eretz Yisrael to Jewish faith is revealed in the flow of the Torah. The third parsha of the Torah, following the parshas dealing with creation and the flood, is parsha Lech Lecha in which God directs Abram (later Abraham) to leave the house of his father in his native land, Ur in Mesopotamia, and "go to the land that I will show you." Toward the end of the parsha, the Torah describes the covenant between God and Abram as designating that land as the territory from "the river in Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River." The early history of the Israelites, the Jewish people, is documented in the comings and goings of Abraham and Sarah and their descendants to and from Canaan, the most epic of which is the forty years of wandering on the way to Canaan following their liberation from slavery in Egypt. Although God forbids Moses from entering the promised land, the last parsha in the Torah, V'Zot Ha B'rakhah, describes Moses' view of Canaan, just before he dies. Eretz Yisrael serves as the bookends to the Torah.

In the post-Torah period, Eretz Yisrael continued to

be central to Jewish religious practice and prayer. Jerusalem was the setting for the First Temple, its rededication by the Maccabees, and the Second Temple. After the destruction of the Second Temple, Jerusalem and Zion emerged as the dominant aspirational focus of prayer and the intertwined hope of return to Eretz Yisrael. For example, when we open the ark and take out the Torah, we recite: "From Zion the Torah comes out, and the word of God from Jerusalem." In the Amidah, recited daily, we ask: "When shall You rule in Zion? Let it be soon in our day, and throughout all time. May you be sanctified in Jerusalem, Your city, from one generation to another, forever and ever."

On this Shavuot, our enemies unabashedly and repeatedly proclaim their determination to wipe the State of Israel off the map. Despite two and one-half years of war subsequent to October 7, our Jewish brothers and sisters in Israel suffer daily hardships, especially pronounced for those living in the beautiful north of Israel, who endure continuing barrages of drones, rockets and missiles. Although American and Israeli attacks have significantly weakened Iran's military power, they have not eliminated the threat from Iran and its terrorist proxies, including Iran's nuclear threat.

In America and around the world, Jews are increasingly the target of physical harassment and attack because of our ties to Israel. Almost as insidiously, our enemies seek to sever the emotional and psychological link between Jewish identity and Eretz Yisrael by negating the 3,000 year old bond between the Jewish people and a sovereign homeland in Eretz Yisrael. In its place, they propound a revisionist, false narrative that depicts the State of Israel as a neocolonialist, imperialist, racist oppressor of Palestinians and, more generally, people of color.

As we observe this Shavuot through teaching and reflection, let us reaffirm the essentiality of the connection between Eretz Yisrael and Jewish identity as revealed on Mount Sinai. Let us have the wisdom to differentiate between legitimate criticism of any government of Israel and its policies and demonization of the State of Israel for the purpose of undermining its very existence. Let us lift our voices and proudly proclaim that we are one people with one heart, committed both to fulfilling the universal teachings of the Torah to repair the world and ensuring that the State of Israel survives and thrives as the promised Jewish homeland in Eretz Yisrael.

Am Yisrael Chai! ■



Women of Beth El Annual Meeting

WITH GUEST SPEAKER
RABBI SHIRA STUTMAN, AUTHOR OF
THE JEWISH WAY TO A GOOD LIFE

Sunday, June 7, 10:00 am



Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 7, at 10:00 am! Join us at Beth El as we elect our new slate of Women of Beth El Officers and Board Members.

After voting, please stay for a morning of learning, socializing, and fun. Rabbi Shira Stutman, a past Sisterhood Shabbat speaker, the senior rabbi at Aspen Jewish Congregation, and cohost of Chutzpod! will discuss her book, *The Jewish Way to a Good Life: Find Happiness, Build Community, and Embrace Lovingkindness*. Find out more and RSVP at bethelmc.org/wbe-annual-meeting-0607.

UPCOMING WOMEN OF BETH EL PROGRAMS

- MONDAY, JUNE 1, 1:00 PM AND WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 7:00 PM WBE Crafters.** We are open to anyone who does any kind of crafting. We meet to have social interaction, get help with projects, learn new things, and work on service project opportunities.
- THURSDAYS, JUNE 4, 11, 18, AND 25, 12:30 PM Drop-In Canasta.** Join us for a relaxed and friendly game of canasta. Beginners and up are welcome; whether you're brand new or just a little rusty, come play and have fun! Sign up at bethelmc.org/canasta.
- THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 7:00 PM Women of Beth El and Men's Club Summer Happy Hour.** Come kick off the Summer by joining us for Happy Hour on the patio at World of Beer in Bethesda. RSVP at bethelmc.org/events/happy-hour-0604.
- SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 10:00 AM Women of Beth El Annual Meeting.** See info on this page.
- WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24 AT 7:30 PM Suff's at the National Theatre.** Join WBE to see the Tony-Award-winning musical *Suff's*. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit bethelmc.org/wbe-suffs-0624.

MEN'S CLUB

UPCOMING MEN'S CLUB PROGRAMS

- SUNDAYS, MARCH 1, 8, 15, 22, AND 29 9:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast.** Join us after morning minyan every Sunday for a breakfast sponsored by Men's Club.
- THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 7:00 PM Women of Beth El and Men's Club Summer Happy Hour.** Come kick off the Summer by joining us for Happy Hour on the patio at World of Beer in Bethesda. We will be providing plentiful (vegetarian) appetizers. Drinks will be available for purchase. The event is free but registration is required. RSVP at bethelmc.org/events/happy-hour-0604.
- THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 7:30 PM Hearing Men's Voices.** Beth El men are welcome to join us in person or via Zoom as Jonathan Simon discusses "How People and Ideas from My Career Influenced My View of the World and My Place in It." RSVP at bethelmc.org/hmv-0604.
- SUNDAY, JULY 12, 7:00 PM Bethesda Big Train Baseball Game.** Come out for Jewish Baseball Heritage Night. More information on this page. See info on this page. RSVP at bethelmc.org/events/baseball-0712.

Come out for Jewish Baseball Heritage Night on Sunday, July 12, at 7:00 pm as the Bethesda Big Train take on the Olney Cropdusters at Shirley Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive, North Bethesda, MD 20852. Gates open at 6:00 pm. The Cal Ripken Sr. Collegiate Baseball League is a wooden bat summer league and is fun for the whole family! Tickets are \$12 per person. RSVP required by June 27 at bethelmc.org/events/baseball-0712.

Books & Beyond

The Psychiatrist at Nuremberg

BY ROBIN JACOBSON

The recent *Nuremberg* movie spotlights a fascinating, behind-the-scenes relationship at the historic Nuremberg Trials that followed World War II. Over many months, U.S. Army psychiatrist Dr. Douglas Kelley examined and evaluated Hermann Göring, who had been Hitler's second-in-command. Kelley's assignment was to determine the mental competency of Göring, as well as other high-ranking prisoners, and ensure that they remained fit to stand trial.

But Kelley was consumed with a more personal goal. He wanted to understand Göring and the other Nazis. They were among the most notorious criminals in human history. What motivated their heinous acts? Was there a psychiatric disorder or mental flaw underlying their brutal behavior? If so, could identifying it help prevent a future Nazi-like regime? Kelley's determination to discover these answers lies at the heart of *The Nazi and the Psychiatrist* by Jack El-Hai, the engrossing non-fiction book on which the *Nuremberg* movie was based.

THE NUREMBERG TRIALS

When World War II ended, the Allies – the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union – needed to decide what to do with 22 captured senior Nazi officials. The Soviets initially favored summary executions, but the Allies ultimately agreed on a public trial to take place in Nuremberg, Germany.

Nuremberg offered both practical and symbolic advantages. Located within the American occupation zone in Germany, the city had a mostly intact courthouse and prison complex. The infamous site of enormous Nazi Party congresses, Nuremberg had also been the place where the Nuremberg Laws, legislation that stripped German Jews of their citizenship, were announced.

The flamboyant Hermann Göring was the top-ranking Nazi official tried at Nuremberg. Besides being a brutal Nazi overlord, Göring was a rapacious plunderer of art works; he arrived in prison with suitcases stuffed with priceless jewelry and other valuables.

GÖRING AND KELLEY

El-Hai's book narrates Kelley's immediate fascination with Göring. In his medical notes, Kelley wrote that Göring was "the most outstanding personality in the jail" because of his powerful intelligence. Kelley established a close rapport with him, partly because of his success in improving Göring's health. He helped Göring break his narcotic addiction and lose weight.

Hungry for company, Göring talked readily to Kelley

about his beloved wife and daughter; he kept framed photos of them in his cell and wrote them frequent letters. He also spoke of his love for animals and his work in reforming German laws and regulations to treat them humanely. These endearing aspects of Göring's personality puzzled Kelley. He observed that for those within Göring's circle of concern, "nothing was too good," but that Göring had an "almost total disregard" for any other living being.

After rigorous mental assessments and hundreds of hours spent talking to the prisoners, Kelley was unable to identify a distinctive "Nazi mind" – a common psychiatric flaw or specific mental illness. In his book, *22 Cells in Nuremberg* (1947), Kelley wrote that the Nazis "were not spectacular types... They simply had three quite unremarkable characteristics in common – and the opportunity to seize power. These three characteristics were: overweening ambition, low ethical standards, [and] a strongly developed nationalism which justified anything done in the name of Germandom."

He told a reporter, "Their personality patterns indicate that, while they are

not socially desirable individuals, their like could very easily be found in America."

Kelley's chilling conclusion – that many people had the potential to act as evilly as the Nazis – haunted him for the rest of his life. Hours before Göring's scheduled execution, the prisoner connived to die by suicide. Twelve years later, Kelley also died by suicide, in full view of his horrified family at their home in California. Kelley ingested potassium cyanide, just as Göring did in his Nuremberg cell.



THE MOVIE, *NUREMBERG*, IS BASED ON *THE NAZI AND THE PSYCHIATRIST*, A NON-FICTION BOOK BY JACK EL-HAI.

PUPS IN THE PARKING LOT *Shabbat*

JOIN BETH EL FOR A FRIDAY NIGHT SHABBAT IN THE PARKING LOT! BRING YOUR FAVORITE FOUR-LEGGED FURRY FRIEND! ALL DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.

Friday, June 12
6:30 pm in the Beth El Parking Lot
 Special oneg to follow with treats for people and pups!



BACK-TO-SHUL BBQ



FIRST DAY OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

5786 Year in Review

PHOTOGRAPHERS DURING THE YEAR INCLUDED MITCHELL SOLKOWITZ, ELISHA FRUMKIN, ALLISON BROWN, RABBI MEGDAL, KATIE FRIEDMAN, AND OTHERS. THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS!



INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE



LATKE-HAMANTASCH DEBATE: NEXT GEN



ANNUAL GALA



BUILD THE JOY



MITZVAH DAY



NEXTUP BETH EL CARE BAG PACKING FOR NOURISHING BETHESDA



HANUKKAH CANDLE LIGHTING



WHAT'S MY STORY? 4TH GRADE B-MITZVAH DATE REVEAL



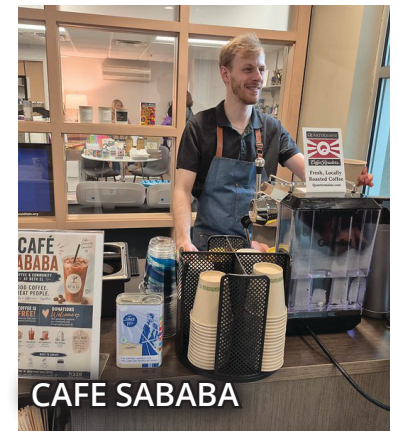
SOCIAL ACTION TEA



MEGILLAH MADNESS



GOOD DEEDS DAY



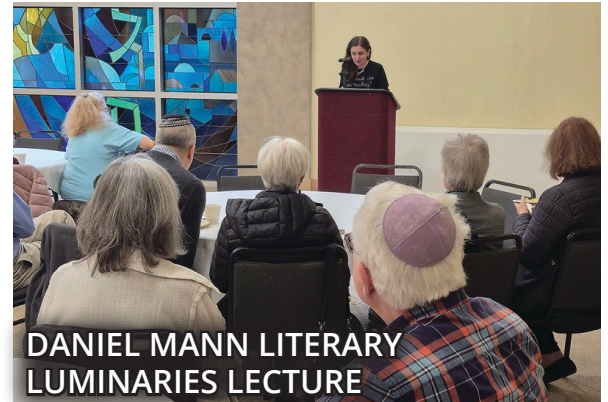
CAFE SABABA



YOM HA'ATZMAUT
ZIMRIYAH



VOLUNTEERING AT
NOURISHING BETHESDA



DANIEL MANN LITERARY
LUMINARIES LECTURE

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kesher Nashim

Kesher Nashim supports female cancer survivors and those with a new cancer diagnosis. Join Beth El women for confidential, lively discussions, friendship, and support at our monthly meetings. One or two women from the group will be "On Call" monthly to talk to any woman interested in more information about the group. Our next meeting is our annual dinner at 6:30 pm on Thursday, June 18. For more information and to register, contact Judy Spector.

Seeking Kiddush Sponsors

Celebrate a special day, remember a loved one, or just because – sponsor a kiddush on a Shabbat/Festival morning when there is no b-mitzvah. Various menus available. Visit bethelmc.org/kiddush, email info@bethelmc.org, or call 301-652-2606 for more information. At least two full weeks' advance notice of sponsorship is required. Available dates are June 6, 20, and 27; July 4, 11, 18, and 25; and August 1, 8, 15, and 29.

Shabbat Kiddush Servers Needed

Thirty minutes and a smile! That's all it takes for one of the happiest mitzvot at Beth El. Serve the kiddush luncheon after b-mitzvah services on Shabbat and make sure everyone gets a warm "Shabbat Shalom" with their delicious food. Everyone 11 and older is welcome to serve. No food prep or cleanup involved. For more information and to sign up, visit www.bethelmc.org/kiddush or contact Sue Kanter at kanterdsw@aol.com.

PLEASE JOIN
RABBI DEBORAH MEGDAL AND
KAREN BENEZRA FOR THE
NAMING OF OUR DAUGHTER



*Meira Baila
Benezra-Megdal*

SATURDAY, JUNE 6
10:00 AM DURING SHABBAT SERVICES
AT CONGREGATION BETH EL
8215 OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD, BETHESDA, MD

PLEASE RSVP AT
BETHELMC.ORG/NAMING-0606



Mazel tov to the 10th Grade Confirmation Class of 2026: Caroline Belford-Peltzman, daughter of Seth Belford and Alissa Peltzman; Michal Frumkin, daughter of Josh and Elisha Frumkin; Koby Goldstein, son of Alan and Candice Goldstein; Leon "Leo" Janssen, son of Rob and Heather Janssen, Hannah Lewington, daughter of John and Jennifer Lewington; Adina Rosner, daughter of Evan and Kristin Rosner; Eliana "Ellie" Silberman, daughter of Reuben and Laura Silberman; and Aden Silverman, son of Adam Chaikin and Alisa Silverman.

BETH EL PRESCHOOL



Registration is now open for our 2026-2027 Mazel Tots program!

Mazel Tots is a baby and toddler program that meets one day per week for play time, music, dancing, art, snack time and more! Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Our Mazel Tots program is designed for children who will be 15-24 months old as of September 1, 2026.

Class meets on Wednesday mornings, beginning in September.

To register go to www.bethelpreschool.org/admissions

For more information reach out to us at preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org ~ (301) 652-8569 ext. 107



Beth El Preschool checks all the boxes!

- ✓ new full-day option
- ✓ play-based curriculum
- ✓ parent co-operative model
- ✓ focus on Jewish values and traditions
- ✓ classes for children ages 15 months to 5 years
- ✓ weekly Tot Shabbat for babies and toddlers
- ✓ special programming for parents and families
- ✓ small class sizes
- ✓ six-week summer camp

Contact us today to set up a personalized tour!

(301) 652-2606 ext. 107 ~ preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org
www.bethelpreschool.org

CONTRIBUTIONS

Please remember that contributions can be made easily, quickly, and securely via our webpage – www.bethelmc.org/give

Donations from April 8 - May 12, 2026.

BY:

Craig Mael
Jerry and Linda Herman
Marcia and Robert Kerchner
Michlean Amir
Leonard and Gabriela Bebachick
Beverly Berman
Sally and Mark Cohn
Ellen Eiseman
Cary and Nancy Feldman
Alan and Judith Gann
Heather Garrett
Barbara Gold
Chad Goldberg and Jamie Ekern
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Mike and Sara Gordon
Josh and Robin Graham
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Ariel Heifetz Knobel and Yishai Knobel
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Rosine Nussenblatt
Thomas Plotz and Cathy Klion
Doris Povich
Mitchell and Emily Rales
Douglas and Barbara Rosing
Benjamin Ross
Gail Fribush
Suzanne Strauss
Jack and Stephanie Ventura

IN HONOR OF:

Adi Jacobson's bar mitzvah, by Marcello and Marilda Averbug
Lily Demain's bat mitzvah, by Rhonda Kleiner
Maya's high school graduation, by Opher and Stephanie Shweiki
Miles and Harrison Gittleman becoming b'nai mitzvah, by Sarah Roark
Our children, Sarah and Matt Brenner, and grandchildren, Tali, Henry, and Max, by David and Ruth Musher
Rabbi Greg Harris for officiating Maya Rales' bat mitzvah, by Mitchell and Emily Rales
Richard and Beverly Rudman for a beautiful Seder, by Sarah Birnbach and Jake Guttmann
Sarah Roark's superior tutoring of Sophie for her bat mitzvah, by Sophie Patterson and Family
Sophie Patterson on becoming a bat mitzvah, by Sarah Roark
Yah Echsof Meditation Group, by Rachael Fleurence

IN MEMORY OF:

Barbara Marion by Jen and Steven Hirsch
Bert King, Susan King's husband, by Margery London, Martin and Sharon Green, Elliot and Esther Wilner
Carolyn Shapiro by Sarah Shapiro
Doris Barry by Allen Eisenberg, Greg and Alana Aronin, Josh Rosenstein & Shayna Bloom, Sue and Bill

Kanter

Elise Greenwald Jacobs by Lois Jacobs
Ilse Stein by Howard and Holly Stein
Joy Lerner, Ruth Lerner Smith, Dora Prag, and Lewis Prag by Herb and Dianne Lerner
Louis and Gertrude Levy by Doris Povich
Louis Lerman by Allen and Barbara Lerman
Louis Tishkoff's yahrzeit by Iris and Julian Tishkoff
Morris Lerner and Evelyn Lerner Kaplan by Herb and Dianne Lerner
My beloved father, Sidney Goldin, by Lynn Goldin and Henry Birnkrant
My beloved mother, Myra Birnkrant, by Henry Birnkrant and Lynn Goldin
Kalman Seigel, my father, by Ann Goodman
Ruth Weinberger, Ruth bat Efrayim v'Hadasah, my sister, by Paul Weinberger
Nettie Rauch by Ruth Ann Heckman
Robert Wantz by Tiarra Joslyn
Ronald Fradkin by Sue and Bill Kanter
Ruth Frieden by Howard and Holly Stein
Shirley Neumann by Sue and Bill Kanter, Ann M. Goldensohn
Terry Feinberg, sister of Douglas Rosing, by Douglas and Barbara Rosing



Join us on Monday, June 1, at 7:00 pm for Sound and Soul: A Jewish Contemplative Sound Experience. This is a guided, meditative evening of sound, breath, and stillness. Using sustained tones

from crystal singing bowls (often called a sound bath), this experience creates a calm, immersive environment for rest and reflection. Participants may sit or lie down in a dimly lit space. The session includes extended periods of continuous sound and quiet. No experience needed. Mats, cushions, and chairs provided. RSVP at bethelmc.org/sound-0601.

A celebratory graphic for a graduation event. It features a blue graduation cap with a gold tassel, surrounded by gold confetti and streamers. The text 'Graduation Aliyah' is written in a large, stylized font. Below it, it says 'JOIN US FOR AN ALIYAH HONORING OUR COLLEGE GRADUATES AND THEIR PARENTS!' and 'JUNE 13, 2026'. At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'TO SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE, EMAIL RFINKELSTEIN@BETHELMC.ORG'.

MAZAL TOV TO

Sarah Rosenthal Cutler and **Josh Meuth Alldredge** on the birth of their son, **Louis Cutler Alldredge**. Louis was born in Boise, Idaho, on March 17. Proud grandparents are **Dale Rosenthal** and **Michael Cutler**.

Elinor and **Madeline Bern** on their b'not mitzvah on May 16. Proud parents are **Michael Bern** and **Rachel Roth**.

Adalyn and **Sarina Fishkind** on their b'not mitzvah on May 2. Proud parents are **Scott** and **Allison Fishkind**.

Noa Laikin on her bat mitzvah on May 9. Proud parents are **Joshua** and **Glenda Laikin**.

Amalia Rittberg on her bat mitzvah on May 9. Proud parents are **David** and **Jennifer Rittberg**.

Melissa and **Nicole Rothman** on their b'not mitzvah on April 25. Proud father is **Mark Rothman**.

June milestone birthdays: **Robert Abramson**, **Karyl Barron**, **Jackie Berman-Gorvine**, **Steve Calem**, **Lesli Gillman**, **Richard Lieberman**, **David Mathison**, **Deborah Neipris Hendler**, **Hellaine Nepo**, **Nancy Rose**, **Barbara Rosing**, **Kristin Rosner**, **Eric Schlesinger**, **Joseph Semo**, **Allan Topol**, and **Hattie Ulan**.

June milestone anniversaries: **Herbert** and **Nancy Rosenthal** (55 years), **Dan Kaplan** and **Kay Richman** (50 years), **Alan** and **Sharon Parver** (45 years), **Gary** and **Sally Ehrlich** (25 years), **Steve** and **Karen London** (25 years), **Michael Kieval** and **Carla Malozowski-Kieval** (20 years) .

CONDOLENCES TO

David and **Fern Barry** on the death of David's mother, **Doris Barry**. Doris was the grandmother of **Asher** and **Emmett Barry**.

Nancy Grunley and **Alan Golden** on the death of Nancy's sister, **Janice Robin Grunley Violette**.

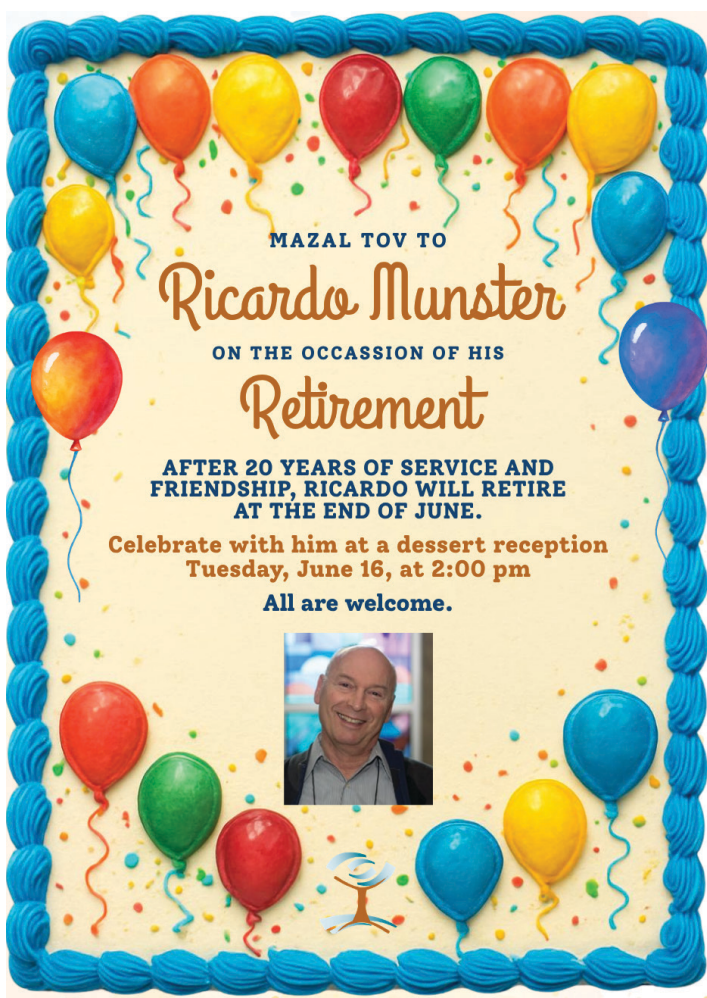
Michael Katz and **Sharon Fine** on the death of Michael's father, **Israel Sherman Katz**. Israel was the husband of **Clara Katz** and the grandfather of **Noah**, **Benjamin**, and **Lilah Katz**.

Leslie and **Joseph Kessler** on the death of Leslie's father, **Ronald Fradkin**. Ronald was the grandfather of **Adam (Vivian) Kessler** and **Katherine Kessler**, and the cousin of **Hazzan Asa Fradkin**.

Dianne Lerner on the death of her husband, **Herbert Lerner**. Herbert was the father of **Mark Lerner** and **Joy Lerner z"l**, and the grandfather of **Lukas**, **Edith**, **Rachel**, **Bryce**, and **Jake**.

Lisa and **Paul Mandell** on the death of Lisa's mother, **Barbara Marion**. Barbara was the grandmother of **Allison**, **Jack**, and **Kate Mandell**.

CHAI SOCIETY 60+



Ricardo Munster Retirement Celebration - Tuesday, June 16, 2:00 pm. Ricardo joined the Beth El staff in 2006. For 20 years he has served in many different capacities, including administrative assistant to the clergy, liaison for b-mitzvah families, and support staff for the Senior Caucus. He performed countless other duties that brought members together and enriched congregational life. Most of all, Ricardo has been a treasured friend and example of what it means to be a mensch.

Join with fellow congregants to show your appreciation and wish Ricardo and his wife Irene many happy and healthy years ahead.

So we can plan for space and food, please register at bethelmc.org/ricardo-0616.

Ricardo will also be honored with an aliyah during the Main Shabbat Service on Saturday, June 13.